S N
II. Stability of the Societies in the Northwest

563 182 It is safe to say that the minorities of Sinkiang, Chinghai and Kansu represent rather unstable societies. This instability has several causes. The first is certainly the fact that the Turks, the Mongols and the Tibetans consider themselves utterly different from the Chinese in regard to race, religion, language, and ethnic grouping; therefore they desire independence and do not want to be ruled by "aliens," which they consider the Chinese to be. The second reason for instability S N [169] is the progressive settling and colonization by Chinese peasants who cut down the pasture areas of the nomadic Mongols, Turks, and Tibetans, and consequently provoke hatred against themselves. The third reason for the unstable character of the S N [651] societies of the Northwest was the reckless taxation of the minorities by many Chinese officials who considered their offices in areas like Sinkiang and Chinghai as an opportunity to gain wealth while holding those offices for a limited number of years. In periods of wars, the minorities were subject to merciless requisition of their cattle and agricultural products. In addition to the friction and animosity between the minorities S N and the Chinese, the disunion among the minorities themselves 563 was at times considerable. As an illustration one might re- 669 member that during the uprisings of the Dungans between 1931 182 and 1936, the Chinese Muslims fought against Turkic Muslims (which supposedly represent a single religious unit), Mongols, Chinese, and White Russians fought against the Chinese Muslims (Dungans) and the Kirghiz and Kazakhs even formed a special unit and fought against both groups or joined one of the two according to the military situation, opportunistically. This period was without doubt the culmination of disunion and confusion among minorities of the Northwest during the last decades.

S 563 On the other hand, when a governor who was more interested 635 in the welfare of the country as such than in his own enrichment, 182 like Sheng Si-ts'ai of Sinkiang with a cleaner officialdom, ruled the province, the society gave a more stable impression and the S N frictions between the various nationalities decreased.

563 A further reason for the disunion of the society in the North- 798 west is the incompatibility of various religions, especially 182 the "martial" Islam on the one hand and the more peaceful Buddhism on the other. The Muslims feel superior to any other religious community; the Buddhists (Mongols, Tibetans, Shera Yögurs, Monguors) consider the Muslims as having a barbarian religion; the Chinese, generous and tolerant in regard to religions consider at least Islam to be somewhat inferior to their own multi-religious conceptions and beliefs.

SN 563 791 in the case of Tibetans more than in the case of the Mongols and Turks.

N 181 [829] While the attitude of the average Northwest Chinese is rather indifferent to national problems, at least as long as his economic position is not unfavorably affected, his approach to individual problems is characterized by a distinct realism and opportunism.

N [635] [162] The provinces of Kansu and Shensi, almost exclusively populated by Chinese, are, in comparison with the provinces of China proper, less progressive in regard to education and general living standard; therefore the frontier Chinese is more conservative but also more suspicious and distrustful when faced with innovations and reforms. He relies more upon himself, seeking and expecting less help from the bureaucracy.

N 181 166 • 167 Generally speaking, the frontier Chinese can be divided into the following groups: the descendants of those who were exiled and ostracized for political reasons during the Manchu period, further on, the descendants of criminals who were sent to the frontier areas as workmen, and last but not least, the colonist (the overwhelming majority), partly adventurers and desperados and partly surplus population of China proper and finally descendants of former garrison troops and merchants from China proper who were condemned to frontier service, desperately looking for new cultivable land.

N 181 Among the Chinese of the Northwest, those living in Shensi and Kansu belong to the oldest settlers. Detached and severed from his old homeland, the frontier Chinese is more versatile and more open-minded towards unusual and unaccustomed situations. The old Confucian ethics in regard to family life and relationship with neighbors is still very strong.

N [812]

The frontier Chinese is possessed by a romantic feeling for his old country. His position at an outpost in a remote area makes him see the old homeland in an euphemistic light.

The frontier Chinese has to prove true and to stand the test more than the Chinese of China proper, which creates a healthy measure of self criticism without falling into the neurotic error of self-laceration. The frontier Chinese is difficult to influence since he is more unrestrained and less bound to his environment than the Chinese of China proper.

N [668] The obvious propagandistic success of the Communists in the Northwest does not contradict the above-mentioned phenomena, because the Communistic propaganda proceeds in an atmosphere of terror and the Chinese, as a born realist and opportunist, inclines to rationalize his pretended acceptance of propaganda.

*175 to the southeast, were interested in the recovery of Turkestan. They had a purely defensive policy for the northwest land frontier. They fortified the passes in the Kansu Corridor and conciliated the Uighur inhabitants of Turkestan by granting them honors and privileges and not interfering with their governments.

The Ming court was more concerned with the Mongols in the north. The strongest of these were the Oirats who at first submitted and then rebelled. The Yung-lo emperor personally led a series of expeditions into Mongolia and succeeded in holding them in check. But as the military strength of Ming China ebbed after his death, their power increased. In 1449, one of their chiefs, Esen, inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Ming forces and took the Ming emperor as prisoner. At the height of their power, the Oirats controlled an area as far west as the northern portion of Tienshan, as far south as Kansu and as far east as Chahar.

Throughout the Ming period, there were incessant encroachments by the Oirat, but the most serious were those led by Altan Khan in the 16th century. In his three major invasions of China, his horsemen despoiled the provinces of Shansi, Ninghsia and Kansu and extended the orbit of his power from Uriangghai in the north to Chinghai and Tibet in the south. He built a vast, though evanescent Mongol empire. Finally, in his old age he accepted a title from the Ming court and halted his raids on China.

Thus, for about eight hundred years from the latter part of the T'ang to the beginning of the Ch'ing, the extent of the Chinese empire did not go beyond the Kansu Corridor and the vast region of the Northwest was free of Chinese rule. During this long period, the Chinese were not only unable to recover Turkestan but they were also uninterested in its recovery. The advance of [167] the border peoples into China's North and Northwest pushed the Chinese to the South and Southeast. Gradually, with the rise of the southeastern coastlands as the cultural and economic centers of China and with the development of maritime travel, there was greater intercourse between China and the outside world by sea. The nation turned towards the Southeast to face the sea and the importance of the Kansu Corridor declined to that of the backdoor of China.

*175 13 487 Another reason for the reorientation was economic. Climatic changes resulting in increased aridity led to the shrinkage of the chain of oases that formed the caravan routes. This made travel difficult, and the desiccation of the soil reduced the fertility of the Wei River valley, once the home of Chinese civilization and *175 73 166 the base for China's imperialist expansion. Natural calamities, such as floods, droughts, pestilence, and famine, and the devastation of wars added to the impoverishment of the area and quickened the shift of population centers from the Northwest to the *175 633 Southeast. Sian (Ch'ang-an) the capital of China for two thousand

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13
Sinkiang AI1

provinces of Northwest China. How much resulted from natural increase and how much is due to recent immigration, is hard to say, because there are no available data. Nevertheless, judged by some current information, the large increase of population of Shensi and Kansu is probably due more to natural increase than to immigration, while the cause for the relatively small increase of Chinghai and Sinkiang is perhaps just the opposite.

D. Distribution of Population by Provinces, Ethnic Groups, Occupation, and Urban Centers

(See Table XIV.)

Before the abolition of Ninghsia in 1955, its population was less than 800,000 living in an area of about 90,000 square miles with a density of about eight persons per square mile. At that time, the density of former Kansu Province was eighty per square mile. Thus the average population density of Chinghai, Sinkiang, and former Ninghsia would be about the same, seven to eight persons per square mile.

Shensi: The population of Shensi Province is predominantly Chinese, concentrated in the Han-chung Basin and the Wei-ho Valley Plain. The former is in the southern part of the Province, drained by the upper Han River flowing into the Yangtze at Kankow. The latter is in the east central part of the Province, drained by the Wei-ho which enters the Yellow River above Tungkuan. The Han-chung Basin and Wei-ho Plain are the two most densely peopled areas of the province of Shensi and the whole Northwest Region. Northern Shensi is hilly and mountainous. It is more thinly populated. There are about four million Mohammedans or Chinese Moslems known as Dungans. They are distributed more in the northwestern part of the province. In addition, a small number of Mongols are found near the Ordos in the north.

Kansu: The former province of Kansu is fairly populated and known as the "Secondary Homeland" of the Moslems in China. The number of Dungans amounts to nearly one third, while the true or Han-Chinese account for about one half of the total population of the province. The rest are Mongols and "Fan" natives. The Mongols are distributed mostly in the former Ninghsia Province; there are the Alashan Mongols scattered in the desert of Alashan in the east, and the Ölöt (Oirat) Mongols along the Ta-hei-ho or Jo-shui or the Edsin River in the west. The "Fan" natives are found in the southwest close to Chinghai Province. They are related to the Tibetan family. Thus they are often called Hsi-Fan or Western Fan or Tsang-fan, the Tibetan natives. The Shero-Yögur, Sarigh-Uighur and Monguor form smaller minority groups.

S
631 political and military reasons. After the last British Consulate
131 of Kashgar was closed, the curtain has become even more
668 impenetrable there than in any other part of China. Not even
172 Chinese are allowed to travel into Sinkiang without special
(648) permits.

N F. Northwest As An Outlet for Chinese Overpopulation
• 167 The Northwest Region has been long regarded by the Chinese
185 as one of the major outlet areas for China's overpopulation. Once the plans to conserve water and soil are completed - especially along the Yellow River in Shensi and Kansu - arable land will be considerably extended. But water and soil conservancy will involve a lot of problems before the land is actually made productive - not to mention that its sustaining capacity is limited. Therefore the Northwest as an outlet for China's overpopulation is tentative and should only be regarded as a partial and temporary solution.

N 1. Extension of Arable Land by Irrigation and Soil Conservancy
311 According to plan the irrigated area in the mid-Yellow River
185 Basin will grow from 12,717,000 acres at present to some 19,105,000 acres. Agricultural output in the irrigated area will more than double. Annual grain output will increase by 6,741,000 long tons and cotton by 590,000 long gons. The loess regions with their barren mountains and desolate gullies covering 143,000 square miles, will become a land of plenty. Most of the land for irrigation development under the project will be in the provinces of Shensi and Kansu. ("China's Sorrow" Will Be No More - The Taming and Exploiting of the Yellow River, by Li Jui, People's China, August 6, 1955, p. 9-15).

S The area of arable land in Sinkiang has also been extended,
311 but it is not easy to ascertain by how much or by what means.
185 In 1953 it had reached twenty million mou, 4,100,000 more than in 1949 (PD. August 28, 1955); in 1954 more than 5,000,000 mou above 1949, i.e. a total of 21 million mou (KM. September 15, 1955; by 1955 22 million mou (PD. October 31, 1955).

According to the above figures, the increase between 1949 and 1955 would be six million mou. But there appear some discrepancies with other information. The difficulty is that the 1950 data for the extension of arable land in Sinkiang was not 16 million but 18.195 million mou (Newspaper Reading Handbook, Hankow, p. 25, 1950). Thus if the present data are reliable, the 1949-55 increase would be three million mou instead of six million, of which 1,100,000 mou are due to the labor of the Army Agrarian Production Troops.

S According to official reports, in 1953, 1.6 million tons of
433 food stuffs were produced in Sinkiang (PD. August 28, 1955). About the production in 1954, it is known that there was an

S
563 body skin is brownish or yellowish and brachycephalism is found
141 in more than 92%. They have high cheek bones, the nose is flat
142 and the eyes show the typical Mongoloid eyefold. The eyes are either black or brown, sometimes even light brown. The hair is also black or dark brown, coarse and straight. Hair growth is sparse. The average height is about 1670 mm. The trunk is strongly-built and the legs are rather short in comparison to those
S of the Uzbeks or Tajiks.
563 3. Relations with non-Mongols

There is no animosity between the various Mongol tribes, but there is a definite antagonism between the Mongols and the Kazakhs and between the Mongols and the Chinese.

S 4. History
563 The Western Mongols are direct descendants from the Oirats
105 of the great Mongolian conquest. At least, since 600 A.D. they
S have lived in this area. Some of the Torguts are recent immi-
[167] grants or, more accurately, returnees. They left Russia in 1771 and returned to their homeland, Dzungaria.

S As far as social organization is concerned, the Oirats are
563 said to represent the old Mongolian pattern. Tribal leaders inherit their political positions, and property is considered in terms of pastures and cattle.

S 5. The leagues
563 The Mongols of Sinkiang were organized into three leagues:
631 (1) the Unen Susuqtu League, consisting of ten banners of Torguts
(2) the Batu Setkhiltu League, consisting of three banners of Khoshuts
(3) the Ching Setkhiltu League, consisting of three banners of Khoshuts and seven banners of Uriangkhai.

N B. The Mongols of Kansu
*563 1. The Mongours
101 a. history

M The Mongours are the most important Mongolian tribe living
[101] in Kansu. They are known under various names. Potanin called them Shirongols, the Chinese call them Tu-jen, the Olots and Torguts call them Dalda or Doldo, the Tanguts call them Cha-hor, but the Mongours themselves use only the latter term. The Mongours
N have been studied by Father Schram who states that the Mongours
*563 came to Kansu in the course of the Mongol conquests in the thir-
*175 teenth century and that furthermore the Mongours were already
• [167] settled in the Hsi-ning area when the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)
M was founded. The Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911) "benefitting by the
175 experience of the Ming succeeded in organizing the country, pri-
[167] marily by subduing the neighbouring tribes of Kokonor, assigning definite territories to each of them and placing them under the jurisdiction of an Amban in 1732; having thus removed the danger of forays by nomadic tribes they were able to develop the country

177
*563 degree that the Tibetan community as a whole exerts an influence
628 on the Chinese migrants within it. The movement of migrants is
*563 unilaterally from the Chinese communities into the Tibetan country.
628 The Tibetans go into Chinese sections to visit, but they do not attempt
• 167 to settle down and make their way among the people. Most of the
177 Chinese who go to the Tibetan sections intend to stay. This one-sided movement of migrants is attributable chiefly to two causes. Population pressuure makes the fallow fields of the Tibetan villages very tempting to the land-hungry Chinese. Moreover, for a number of reasons, the Tibetan country is the traditional refuge for the Chinese of nearby communities whenever rebellion or banditry is rife. The Chinese, with their large families, constitute a population reservoir from which the overflow passes into any group which lacks a similarly strong population pressure. The Tibetans, and especially the village people of the Choni district in the Northwest, offer no such resistance, for unquestionably their population is
*563 decreasing. Then, the Tibetan country repeatedly has been a most
628 effective shelter for refugees from the Moslem rebellions and from
167 the disturbances caused by bandits and contending armies. In such
927 circumstances the closely-integrated Tibetan community acts more
177 promptly and efficiently to defend itself than does the Chinese community. By habit, the Tibetans are armed to an extent unknown among
[181] the Chinese. The Tibetans are rather soft-hearted toward refugees, especially if they are destitute. By Tibetan custom the right of refuge has been a basic one, and when it is reinforced by the claims of acquaintance and the functioning of the "guest-host system" this right of refuge can open a path into the most exclusive Tibetan communities.

*563 The process of contact between the Chinese and the Tibetans is
582 also contained within the mechanics of intermarriage, which is of
177 two kinds: the matrilocal, in which the Chinese man takes his place
[591] as son-in-law in the Tibetan home, and the patrilocal, in which through his wife's connections he is able to set up his own home in the Tibetan community. When a young Chinese is taken into a
*563 Tibetan home as a son-in-law, he naturally becomes as much like
177 a Tibetan as he can. If other factors do not bring him into further contact with Chinese culture, he may become very much of a Tibetan. His children will be brought up as Tibetans. After a generation of two only a Tibetan nickname may remain to indicate the Chinese ancestry in the family. However, when a Chinese man marries a Tibetan wife and establishes his own home, he generally attempts to set up a Chinese home and to maintain the Chinese mode of living and outlook. This is true especially if any Chinese members of his family - mother, brothers, or other relatives live with him. Thus, the family serves to push the Chinese frontier into the Tibetan country. A single Chinese living in a Tibetan community sooner

*563 or later is assimilated. But if a Chinese family goes there to live
122 it will remain Chinese and will attract other Chinese families. After
167 a few decades the whole community becomes Chinese.
621

In addition to familial cross-contacts, there are others of a
*563 strictly economic character. Certain craftsmen, such as carpenters,
463 blacksmiths, and millers, very easily obtain a foothold in a Tibetan
177 community. They find very poor competition from most of the
621 Tibetan artisans, although once in a while there is a Tibetan workman of outstanding skill and reputation. Much of the village trade also will gradually pass into the hands of the Chinese traders. Also, poor Chinese come to the Tibetan villages as laborers, lumbermen and charcoal burners.

*563 An isolated Chinese migrant in the midst of Tibetan influence
167 and environment undoubtedly would become Tibetan. But actually
621 this situation does not exist. Behind the individual Chinese and
177 reinforcing him in successive stages is sustained population pressure from the Chinese country. One by one, others follow his lead and press into the Tibetan community through the opening he has made. Once a number of Chinese families are established in a village, they are sure to become dominant simply as a result of the differential birth rates. Slowly the community becomes increasingly like a Chinese village. Finally, Chinese influence is paramount because the agents who exert that influence and spread that culture have a definite advantage over the Tibetans. They can talk the language of Government officials and wealthy merchants and traders, and they have superior business acumen and industry. The village oil-press or grist-mill eventually passes into the hands of a Chinese if, as is more usual, he has not started it himself. So the Chinese members of the village community forge to the front. After a certain length of time, a once-Tibetan village will become very much like a Chinese community. Even when the village has become all "Chinese", however, the quiver shrines of the mountain gods at the highest mountain peaks still are tended and replenished annually. Thus certain aspects of Tibetan culture and religious observance persist despite the otherwise complete transformation of the Tibetan village into a Chinese one.

There is little information about social classes and land tenure
*563 in the far Northwest. However, the general impression is that in
565 the central and eastern parts of Shensi and in the important cities
423 of Kansu, where the population is mainly Chinese, the patterns of social distinction and land distribution are similar to those of China Proper. The Chinese in these areas and in all the other provinces
[184] have fundamentally the same culture, with only some minor local variations. For this reason, the reader is referred to the section on Social Structure in the General Handbook.

/The Han Chinese/

*563 minority tribes or bandits, and lately there have been skir-
*[175] mishes between the warlords and between the Nationalists and
[351] the Communists. These disturbances have not only deprived the people of normal livelihood but also increased their financial burden, as they have been taxed heavily by both the government
[731] and the warlords to support the fighting armies. Moreover, the region is susceptible to the disasters of flood and famine. The
• [167] corruption in officialdom, the banditry, the armies and the disasters have caused people of means to leave the region and make
[463] their homes elsewhere. Of course there are officials and rich merchants who have authority in political and economic matters, but it may be said that the majority of those left behind are small business men and poor farmers who stay on their land and struggle for a living.

*563 It should be noted that the southeast part of Northwest China
131 is the place where Chinese civilization and culture developed and matured. This region, around the Wei and Lo Rivers, referred to as Kuang-chung, was the most prosperous and well-developed part of China during many of the Imperial dynasties. According to Communist geographical division, Kuang-chung, the area within Shensi Province, is included in the Northwest region. It is a region of fertile soil, where Han Chinese farmers have made their homes for countless generations. The regions to the north and west are populated by the Chinese Moslems, the Mon-
[441] gols and the Tibetans. As this is the case, many Han Chinese
[439] who remained in the Northwest became merchants who traveled north to Mongolia and west to Sinkiang with their caravan trade. There are also soldiers and prisoners who had settled here generations ago.

*563 Village dwellings are the conventional types of mud huts.
342 Some live in caves, the rich in elaborate caves with fine furnishings, the very poor in caves scooped out of the porous yel-
[369] low earth cliffs. In cities and towns where the wealthy merchants dwell, one of course finds the traditional big brick home with several courtyards, as well as modern two-story houses. But in Pao-chi, most of the people live in caves with regular doors and windows, dug out of the cliffs.

*563 The eating habits of these people are slightly different from
262 those of the Han Chinese in other parts of China, in that more flour than rice is consumed. Rich people have no difficulty in
[556] obtaining all the delicacies they desire. Meat, eggs, fruits, fowl, rice, flour and vegetables are their common fare, but the poor people can afford only barley flour, millet and salted vegetables for their daily diet. Tou-fu, soybean cake, is consumed
*563 by rich and poor alike. Clothing in this region resembles that
291 worn by Chinese in other parts of the country. Among nomads and the poor, sheepskin coats are very common. They are worn with the fur side inside.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

N I. Newspapers

175 During the past decades, Northwest China was lagging in cul-
204 tural development. There were very few newspapers before 1937.
• 167 After the war started, numerous people migrated from the coastal
N provinces into the Northwest. Among these there were a great
[873] number of intelligentsia. Several universities moved from Peking into the Northwest and thousands of students poured into the area. With the coming of these people, the average of cultural standard
N was greatly raised and the demand for more and better newspapers
204 increased. A number of papers emerged and some stayed. Among these, some were supported by the Nationalist Party, such as the Hsi-ching jih-pao or the Western Capital Daily in Sian. Some were supported by the San-min-chu-i Youth Corps, such as Ch'ing-nien jih-pao or the Youth Daily, in the same city. Some were supported by churches, such as the I-shih-pao (Sian edition) in Sian, a Catholic paper. Some were supported by local influences, such as Ch'ing-feng jih-pao in Sian. After the war, there were even anti-government papers, such as Kung-shang jih-pao in Sian, organ of the Democratic League.

Some of these papers achieved an admirable standard of quality. In appearance, these papers were unattractive. Usually printed on the native newsprint, which was thin, dark and rough, the print
N was often unclear. Bad as it was, this kind of newsprint was ex-
[656] pensive and could be bought in quantity only through government rationing. In fact, the government did occasionally use this authority of rationing newsprint to practice a kind of indirect censorship on the papers. Papers were occasionally cut off their rations and found it necessary to buy on the black market at forbidding prices. The dailies usually had no more than four pages, with half of the space occupied by advertisements. About a page and a half would carry the national and world news, editorials, and articles, leaving about half of a page for local news and miscellaneous subjects. The news were mainly supplied by the Central News Agency, a Nationalist Party organ. Within these limitations, little could be done to give profile to a paper. This monotonous pattern was later broken by the anti-government papers, which carried a lot of the Communist news and views. The circulation of all the papers was limited among the intelligentsia, officials and merchants. Few, if any, of the papers exceeded a daily
S circulation of 10,000 copies. In Sinkiang, during the administra-
204 tion of Sheng Shih-tsai, there were editions of the Sinkiang jih-pao published in seven languages. (Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 73.)

N After the Communists conquered the Northwest, they took over
204 all the former government papers. The private papers were dis-
+668 couraged to continue. According to the limited information avail-
179 able, the following papers have been or are being edited in the

LABOR

I. "Free Labor

Information on labor conditions in the Northwest is very scanty. However, there are indications that the Communists have faced a very serious problem of labor shortage in that area. To begin with, the Northwest is a very sparsely populated area. It embraces about one third of China's territory, but its population is only about six percent of the national total. If any large scale reconstruction works are to be effected, it seems to be necessary to use outside labor supplies. Moreover, educational standards in the Northwest have been relatively low. Consequently, the quality of native labor is also a problem.

To overcome these difficulties, the Communists have adopted several methods. One is to encourage or force skilled and semi-skilled labor in other parts of the country to work in the Northwest. For instance, the communication department of Sinkiang in May, 1955, absorbed some 409 automobile drivers and mechanics from among the demobilized servicemen in Shantung and Honan for reconstruction work in the border regions. In March, 1955, 200 cadres of Hui nationality of the People's Liberation Army Railway Corps have been transfered to work in the Hui-nationality areas in Kansu and Chinghai. Most of these cadres have passed through the Anti-Japanese "War of Liberation," land reform and Anti-U.S. and Aid-Korea campaigns. Of these ninety percent are party members or members of the Communist Youth League.

In late 1954, four thousand skilled building workers and technicians from other cities have signed up for work in Sian. They began to arrive from Shanghai, Wuhan, Canton and other places in early 1955, and they were warmly welcomed by the local authorities. All this shows that outside labor has played a very important part in the economic reconstruction in the Northwest (See also section Population).

II. Army Labor

Another method is to use the army as a labor force. This has been particularly important in Sinkiang, in which the People's Liberation Army have participated in many reconstruction projects. To take 1955 as an example, they were engaged in the following tasks:

A March 24, 1955, despatch reports: "The People's Liberation Army farming units in Sinkiang have started their afforestation program in the south of this province. This year they plan to plant trees on 1,200 hectares, mostly shelter belts to protect reclaimed farmland."

unity among the major national and ethnic groups. Neither have really succeeded in achieving their aims. On the other hand, it was in the Northwest that the Chinese Communists first came to power. In the 1930's, the headquarters of Chinese Communism was at Yenan, and the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region became the basis of their might. After 1949, the Northwest was regarded as one of the "old liberated areas," and the birthplace of the new regime.

IV. Dissatisfaction with Communist Regime

With the establishment of Communist administration, new reasons for discontent have arisen, while many of the old ones have not been remedied. In the first place, it is obvious that Islam, or any of the other religions of the Northwest, is basically incompatible with Marxism, a materialistic philosophy and a way of life that excludes any belief in the supernatural. Secondly, after centuries of relative freedom, if not of independence, Communism has brought to the nomadic tribes of the Northwest a system of government that is more centralized than any previous one in modern times. With it also came such impositions as the enforcement of Five Year Plan goals, the meeting of industrial and agricultural quotas, and the insecurity which police and party supervision create. The old tribal and family organization of the peoples of Sinkiang (especially the Kirghiz and the Kazakhs) is quite remote from the Communist institutions of control whereby economic classes are ruled from party, military and bureaucratic centers. Many have rebelled against it or left their native country altogether.

A. Degree of Acceptance of Communism

Yet it would not be correct to say that discontent is universal in the Northwest. The Communists, well realizing the importance of the Islamic faith and the cultural values of the minorities, have done their best to appear as the protectors and promoters of their spiritual needs. To a large degree they have succeeded in creating that impression. To the Turks of Sinkiang the Communists appeared sincerely interested in the survival of Mohammedanism. They failed to realize that cultural control amounted to an attempt to ensure political control over the Islamic communities.

The number of refugees from Central Asia testifies to the strong anti-Communist feelings that have existed among the Turkic peoples since the 1920's. However, Communist policies were such that many of those who remained have become loyal supporters of the regime. The technological improvements, especially in the field of irrigation, that the Communists have introduced, impressed them greatly. The fact that under army supervision virtual slave labor was used to accomplish this, has less signifi-

*668 172 [166] cance than the fact that the hardships and disasters previously caused by poor precipitation now seem to have been eliminated. Livestock has improved, as has the economy in general. There is a fairly good public health program to protect humans, and an even better one for the cattle. With patriotic fanfare both men and beasts now must undergo inoculation campaigns. In the cultural sphere, the Communists have increased the number of schools and have extended adult and higher education. Religious practices are not restricted. The native theater, music and dance, as well as the publication of books and magazines in the native languages, are officially encouraged, and lend color to what is generously called "cultural autonomy." Women have been given equal rights with men, a policy that has caused that segment to look favorably on the whole Communist regime. Even the enforcement of public safety and order has revealed a positive side. It has stopped the endless inter-tribal struggles over pasture lands and irrigation rights, and has insured a certain degree of internal peace - even if a rather artificial one. Mechanization in agriculture and industrialization in general has brought a great deal of pride to the tribal people. The superficial rights they have obtained have created a surprising amount of loyalty toward the regime.

• [167] As a result, the number of refugees leaving for Afghanistan, Iran, Tibet and Pakistan, has become smaller, and the organs of effective opposition within Sinkiang and Northwestern China have become considerably weaker, a condition not entirely attributable to the campaign of suppression of counterrevolutionaries.

*668 669 B. "Counter-Revolutionary" Activities

While all this may be true to some degree, there are sufficient indications that the negative aspects of Communism often are greater than the technological gains and cultural freedoms that have made it acceptable to a substantial part of the population. The campaign for the suppression of counter-revolutionaries revealed that large numbers of people are antagonistic toward the Communist policies. (For incidents of this kind see section on Public Order and Safety and Political Dynamics). If these statements seem to be mutually contradictory, it must be remembered that elements of truth are present in both contentions. Any categoric evaluation of the attitudes of the people toward the Communist regime would surely be unrealistic. It must also be noted that official sources tend to exaggerate the evil and intensity of the counter-revolutionary activities in order to carry on an effective suppression campaign. This policy itself will continue to increase the dissatisfaction and insecurity of the people. Another point to be remembered is that opposition to the Communist administration is not uniform throughout the Northwest. The provinces of Kansu, Ninghsia and Chinghai, are inhabited by large numbers of Chinese,

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
AF13 Northwest China AF13

733 simultaneously lit, the pipe produced, and the pillow
spread for the wretched feast. This town might easi
[448 be one of the most prosperous of Kansu, being th
237] centre of the lamb-skin trade, and at mid-January th
merchants come from all quarters to buy the tin
soft skins of the lambs, killed on the fourteenth day
their existence. Large sums of money change hands
Yungchang, yet all is consumed in smoke, and spe
upon that which satisfieth not. The men are gaunt an
[567] dishevelled, the women keep indoors for lack of dece
clothing, and Yungchang supplies the slave market wi
its required commodity of little girls for the great citi

167 We were leaving our inn one morning, when soa
Chinese called our attention to the fact that a foreigne
' one of your own people,' was begging at the door. W
found a crowd collected round a ragged Russian, w
was begging his way to Peking. The road over whi
we were travelling was the *Via Dolorosa* of the Russi
refugees, who, driven forth by poverty or unwillingn
to register their acceptance of the Soviet rule, f
themselves homeless exiles on the face of the glo
For some months before our arrival a great stream
suffering humanity poured down this highway, in ev
stage of poverty and utter destitution. Until t
great war of 1914, the peoples of the East were un
the delusion that race-solidarity, which in them sup
sedes the instinct of individual nationality (stre
though that be), was also impregnable in the We
From this time, however, European prestige w
entirely shattered ; and the sight of homeless, pennil
whites swelling the ranks of Chinese beggars, and
helpless women becoming the concubines of Chin
men, was a violation of their sense of fitness : nor ha
the common people ever recovered from the sh
caused by these unthought-of proceedings.

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China AF13
~~Sinkiang AI 1~~

the hour at which the midday meal is served. In place of the customary fresco of the tiger endeavouring to seize the sun in its jaws, which symbolises the covetousness of the man who seeks to devour his neighbour's goods, the wall was frescoed with the 'Map of China's Shame,' showing China and her dependencies, with prominent scarlet patches indicating those portions which have been seized by foreign powers, and a similar map was exhibited in all the towns we visited in North-West China.

The business men, with whom we were friendly, seeing the group of students with us, at once seriously warned us of the trouble we might certainly expect in attempting to cross the Turkestan border with them. We learnt that young men were constantly impressed at that point, and afterwards were neither allowed to continue their journey nor to turn back, as the Governor of Sinkiang was raising an army of defence, and was conscripting every man who passed that way. They consequently earnestly begged us not to risk such complications as might ensue on the attempt to take our fellow-workers with us into Turkestan. Needless to say, the students themselves, keen, enthusiastic, and ready as they were to face every emergency, felt quite confident that all would turn out well, but our wider experience caused us to spend many anxious moments as we faced this new contingency. Our attention was also drawn to the fact that the Turki merchants, who usually travelled in large numbers up and down the road, were no longer to be seen, since, by the Governor's regulation, no man from Sinkiang could enter China, neither could one from Kansu pass into Sinkiang.

For many years the atmosphere of China had been so constantly disturbed by rumours, that if we had paid much attention to them our work must have come to a

Hsining and To ba, stems from the military colonizations of the Han period. (2) The city is 2,680 meters above sea level. In the

2. A few lis below the present city of Dankar, at the upper mouth of the valley, there are huge loam walls that might go back to the Tang period.

vicinity barley, oats, and vetch are raised, but no longer much wheat. There are still real Chinese farmers as far up as this, although not very many. With their industry and their stable culture they have spread out wherever the earth promises a yield, especially in the axes of the larger valleys. But in Hsining fu today, i.e., in the district under the Hsining inspector, to which Dankar belongs, all the smaller lateral valleys are inhabited by remnants of non-Chinese peoples. The Mohammedans who have been more than decimated since 1895 are to be found in great numbers only in certain places. One has the impression as though they were once artificially pushed in between the Chinese and Tibetans and as though the Chinese were only now following after. All the Chinese in Hsining fu still maintain that they come from the lowlands, most of them saying that they came from the Nanking region. (3) It is

3. Kiangsu province; either as military colonists or as exiles.

considered too barbaric to say that one comes from the land itself, just as in the province of Szechwan where the Chinese still assure you that they come from such and such a province but never from Szechwan itself, even though it has 45, in fact some people say 68 million Chinese today. (4)

4. The official count (better, estimate) of the year 1902 reports 68,724,890 inhabitants for Szechwan. Hosie, probably the greatest specialist on that region, estimates the population at 45 million. According to the census of 1911, it probably has 55 million. According to earlier official estimates, Kansu was said to have 10 million inhabitants. According to the census of 1910/11 Kansu has between 3,800,000 and 4,500,000 inhabitants, or 711,000 independent and 195,639 dependent families or households. Thus, according to my calculation, it has 12 inhabitants per square kilometer.

N.w. China AF13
Tu ren

yüan bu. A single day's horseback ride took me there. (1) 361

1. Prschewalski's Yjam bu. In Prschewalski, Reisen in Tibet, translated by Stein, the Tu ren which I am about to describe are spoken of as Daldy, Doldy and Tunschen, and Prschewalski believes they originated in Samarkand and are a mixture of the Aryan and Mongolian race.

This Wei yüan bu is a little market town, ninety lis distant from 361
the city of Hsining fu toward the north-northeast, and is geologically 133
in the same red tertiary clay basin as the prefecture city of Hsining and the monastery Gum bum. The edge of the basin is about 10 kilometers beyond on the north and east and it is only there that one again finds granite and slate looming up out of the loess-covered tertiary. Thus, from north to south the width of the red clay of the Hsining fu basin is 50-60 kilometers. In modern times these red strata were split up into so many valleys and ravines that even this tertiary region has now become a bizarre mountain country. The material is so soft that the valley bottoms of the larger streams have been washed out to form wide beds. At the spot where Wei yüan bu is situated a large plain several square kilometers in size has been formed by the union of two such broad-bottomed, fruitful valleys. This undoubtedly accounts for the location and the importance of the place.

For, Wei yüan bu is an important town. It can even be called 361
a small city. It has a civil official who is now under the hsien of [624]
Hsining, it is the seat of a captain and second lieutenant, it has a city wall, a full half-dozen pawn shops, and all kinds of craftsmen. Above all there are important whiskey distillers among its inhabit- [274]
ants, who export their product as far as Lanchow and far into Tibet, and /246/ many mill owners whose mills, like those throughout East Tibet, are characterized by vertical axle trees and horizontally placed paddle wheels. In the census of 1895 the town had 820 fami- [162]
lies. For me Wei yüan bu was important as the present-day chief town and market-place of the Tu ren who are under the administra- [443]
tion of the hsien of Hsining.

Tu ren (tu jen) literally means "earth man." It is a Chinese 563
word and means "a resident." It refers to those people who were 167
already in the country before the last Chinese inundation. This last large immigration of Chinese began in the Mongol Dynasty (1260-1368) and still continues.

quotes the Chinese chronicles as follows: T'ou kou hounn (or T'u gu hun) was the eldest son of "Chee koei," the khan of the Sien pi (Hsien be - Tungus?) but was the son of a concubine. His father gave him a horde, but the actual heritage went to the legitimate son, Mou joung hoei. After the father's death (around 308 A. D.) the brothers quarreled because their horses had fought together. T'ou kou hounn left his home in present-day Manchuria, along with his horde and crossed the Liao River. At that time the Chinese Empire was split up into many small principalities and in what is now Shensi Huns ruled. T'ou kou hounn's horde pushed on farther and farther to the southwest until they found good pastures in the Koko Nor region. As time went on the T'ou kou hounn of the Koko Nor region were often mentioned by Chinese chroniclers. 563 173

/248/ A few Tu ren teachers of Wei yüan bu maintained that their ancestors lived in the present-day province of Shansi in the North during the time of the Tang emperors (620-907). They said that their prince at that time had been Li ts'in wang (King Li) who had thirteen sons and assisted the Tang emperor when he was in great trouble, by defeating "Hoang ts'ao." They had always been free and it was only in the Ming period that they had come under Chinese domination. In the meantime a ruler with the title of Nan ding wang ruled them and he was supposed to have supported the emperor in his struggle against Tibetan invasions, that is to say, he was a sort of frontier guardsman for the Chinese. (1) 167 175 563

1. In various places within their empire the Chinese have allowed foreign peoples to remain. As we can clearly see in the Hsining Valley, they always pushed into the neighboring countries along the trade routes and did not disturb the former inhabitants in the mountains unless they were energetically aroused by them. Thus, the "wild Yao" have remained to this day in the mountains of South Hunan, and in southwest China the tribes of Miao tse, of independent Lolo, and others lived interspersed with Chinese. In the northwest near Hsining the Chinese began pushing forward more than 2,000 years ago, as we mentioned above, pp. 286 and 309. But they were checked by renewed disorders of the nomads after the Hsiung nu (the Huns) had conquered present-day

N.W China AF13
Tu ren

•167 Central Mongolia in the year 177 B.C. With the beginning
175 of the fourth century the Tu ku hun (formerly probably al-
563 ways pronounced Tu yü hun) appear with 1,100 families in Kansu and Koko Nor. As we said before, they are supposed to represent an eastern branch of the Hsiun nu and be of Turko-Mongolian origin. In the year 445 one of their khans conquered the wealthy city of Khotan in Turkistan and killed the king there. In 556 they withstood hard battles with the Turks who came from the north. Around 390 they numbered 15,000 families and in the course of the years they made repeated invasions deep into Chinese territory, until finally in 635 (after more than 300 years) the Chinese checked them. Shortly thereafter (663) they were vanquished by the Tibetans who resided in the south and whose tribes had just been united by the greatest Tibetan ruler, Srong btsan sgam bo. The Tibetans (the Tu fan of the Chinese chronicles) drove them from the succulent pastures of the Koko Nor and into the Nan Shan Mountains and their last king is said to have fled with the remains of his people from Nan Shan to Ning hsia where the tribe disappeared presumably around the year 672. But they are mentioned subsequently a few times in the Tang schu. Some of them must have been able to maintain themselves in Kansu.

162 The Tu ren are now domiciled not only around Wei yüan
563 bu (with about 3,000 families) but there are a few hundred
175 families south of the Hwang Ho near Bau ngan wedged in between Tibetans and Salar, while 2,000-3,000 more families live in San tschuan on the most inaccessible spot of the Hwang Ho below Hsün hoa ting, and 2,000 families live on the Da tung Ho; and in the extreme north the so-called Hoang fan or "yellow barbarians" in the valleys of Richthofen Ridge of the Nan Shan, on the upper course of the Edsingol, also
563 belong to them. These represent large remnants of peoples
175 which makes it obvious that they must at one time have belonged to something larger and better, and since the Chinese chronicles do not tell of any other peoples, except later on the Khoshot-Mongols, who founded an important kingdom, it almost follows that the Tu ren must be the remnants of the Tu ku hun. Later on they must also have formed part of the population of the Hsi Hsia kingdom which carried on long wars with the Chinese and Tibetans for the possession

N.W. China AF 13
KalmyK

and consists mainly of Khoshot. The family of the dsassak stems from Tseren Khatan Batur, the younger brother of Gushi Khan. The incumbents of the office of dsassak became taidshi of the first class for the first time in 1725 and the office is hereditary since 1782. Nineteen of the twenty-one Khoshot banners of the Koko Nor belong to descendants of Gushi Khan, one (Taidschinär) to the descendants of the older brother of Gushi, one (Barun) to the descendants of the younger brother. 643

Very near to the dsassak's houses lived a brother and a cousin of my servant Han. They were two Dungan who had fled here in 1896 from the Hsining territory when the rebellion was quelled and the Dungan emigrated en masse. They had lost their fortunes during the war and became subjects of the Barun dsassak. Both of them had now taken Mongolian wives and established a household. We stayed a night with one of them, and I was touched to see how Han, at the request of his clan and all the Bamba Mohammedans, tried to persuade the brother and cousin to return home. In our honor a sheep had been picked out of the herd and my Han was entrusted with killing it according to Mohammedan rites. Everything Buddhistic had been removed from the yurt in our honor. The two pseudo-Mongols had at the first unsuspected meeting, shamefully removed the amulets which they wore around their throats according to lamaistic custom, and put them in their pockets. The Mongolian wife made no effort to hide her displeasure at her husband's conduct and at his sudden shame before his Mohammedan brother, as though their Buddhistic gods were not as good as the god of Islam. She sat idly in her tent beside me and made a sullen face, letting her husband take care of all the hospitality, alone. She was naked to the waist because of the heat. A half dozen small leather pouches and a small bronze Buddha shrine hung down to her ample breasts. Her small, four-year-old son was her only comfort in her anger. He kept running up to slake his thirst at his mother's breast. 167 000

My servant Han spoke Chinese which the Mongol woman did not understand and /352/ tried all his powers of persuasion. "You are living in wedlock here with a dirty Fan po, we Mohammedans shall get you a clean woman from among our people in the lowlands." - "The Mongolian woman presented me with a lovely little boy whom I do not like to leave." - "When you die they will expose your body